

STATEMENT OF FACTS

by Manuel Rios Camis

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I was in Empalme - Sonora at the contracting station for two months. I had to work for two months picking cotton. This is the way to get a letter of Introduction to the station.

I went to El Centro to the reception Center where I was examined for any physical illness. I was found to be healthy. There at the Center I was told only that I was going to Santa Barbara to pick lemons. I was given a contract to sign but nothing else was said. No one explained my rights to me or to anyone else. I can read spanish a little so I did the best I could with the contract. The day I arrived in El Centro was on the 28th of November and I left that same day. I made the trip to Santa Barbara by bus. We were given a sack lunch and we made one stop at a gas station. We traveled about eight hours, we got to Santa Barbara at night. When I got to the labor camp (San Marcos) in Goleta, we were received by a man employed by the camp who said he was our representative. I got some blankets and a mattress and a bed.

I started work on the 30th of November and I started to learn to pick lemons. The foreman taught me how to pick lemons.

I worked for about three months very well making about \$55.00 per week to about \$40.00 per week. I was being paid 36 cents per hour and 20 cents per box. But one day in March I fell from a ladder and injured my back. The foreman noticed me when I fell. Later I was taken to see the Company doctor, Dr. Dodd.

The Doctor saw my back and gave me an injection in the rear.

The company Doctor didn't say anything so I returned three or four times finally I was getting no better so I went to see Dr. Sanchez in Santa Barbara. Dr. Sanchez took X-Rays and treated me and he sent me to a specialist. I was not able to work. I wrote to the Mexican Consul for help and advice, he never came to see me. He wrote to me telling me to try to get the company to pay for my medical expenses.

Dr. Sanchez sent me to Dr. Graham at the Santa Barbara Medical Clinic.

I knew that I had insurance because my check stubs showed deductions taken out for this but I was never given a policy for my information and no one told me anything about my insurance. I was told that I was to have an operation by Dr. Graham. This Doctor informed the Camp Manager about this. I was operated on and while in the hospital, I was given a check for \$200.00 from State Compensation.

The Camp Manager and others were not helping me and the Doctor at the Camp was not doing much for me so I got some help from Mrs. Elvira Quiroga of 915 East Yanonoli in Santa Barbara, who helped me get medical attentions and who filled all the State Forms for Compensations. She also helped me get a lawyer because I wanted one to protect my rights.

I was glad that I got a lawyer to help me because I have seen other contracted workers sent home without compensation for their injuries and without being well. I did not want that to happen to me.

There is a lot of pressure put on us when we get hurt to leave for Mexico. The Company Doctor ignores our illnesses by giving us the same pills for a headache and colds as he does for other injuries.

I saw other workers getting the same treatment as myself for other illnesses.

I am thirty years old and because of this injury that Dr. Graham says so permanent, I will not be of much use in Mexico. I will not be able to work like before. I don't know what will become of me. I hope that I can learn some other type of work where my back will not bother me.

It was possible for me to earn about \$18.00 per week in Mexico before I got injured. Now I don't know what I'll earn.

This statement has been read to me and is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

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